

DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Sue Milburn – Clerk

Forge Green Office, Riverside, Dalston, Carlisle CA5 7QG

Tel: 01228 712766; Email: clerk@dalston.org.uk



POLICY FOR THE PROVISION OF DEFIBRILLATORS IN DALSTON

Adopted by Full council on 9 June 2026

Outcomes following cardiac arrest in the community remain poor, 7-8% of patients will be alive after 30 days. An audit of ambulance responses to cardiac arrest calls showed that only 25% of patients got to A+E with their hearts beating after resuscitation in the community (University of Warwick Clinical Trials Unit 2024). The research also highlighted that there were low levels of defibrillation in the community, despite 70% of patients receiving CPR, less than 10% received defibrillation using a public accessed defibrillator. The researchers commented that outcomes may be improved by increasing access to public access defibrillators.

The Resuscitation Council recommends that defibrillators should be available within 200 yards or a 2 minute walk. Currently there are nowhere near this number of defibrillators anywhere in the community, particularly in rural areas. The British Heart Foundation will fund one defibrillator for a Parish Council or other Community Groups with some stipulations around deployment and ongoing maintenance. There are other funds that will contribute to the cost of defibrillators (Action Together, AED Donate, DHSC Community AED fund), many partially fund in the expectation that there will be co-funding.

Legal obligation on Dalston Parish Council:

Defibrillators (Availability) Bill 2019

Provision of defibrillators by town, parish, community and neighbourhood councils

(1) By 1 April 2020 all town, parish, community and neighbourhood councils in England are required to provide at least one publicly available defibrillator.

(2) When a council provides a defibrillator the council must— (a) ensure that the defibrillator is installed and maintained according to the manufacturer's recommendations; (b) ensure that the defibrillator is provided with signage to make it easily identified and located by the public and which meets any guidance on signage issued by the Health and Wellbeing Board; and (c) inform the Health and Wellbeing Board of its installation and operation.

(3) When a council provides a defibrillator it may promote public awareness of the defibrillator in the area in which it is located.

Current provision:

Dalston currently has 10 defibrillators situated in the following locations,

Bridge End pub

Coop

Greensyke House, Cumdivock

Dalston Masonic Lodge

Paragon Vet Group

Primrose Hall, Gaitsgill

Raughton Head school

Sports Hall entrance Caldew School

Recreation Centre, Dalston

Hospice at Home, Barras Lane Industrial Estate.

The two **underlined locations** in bold italics are locations where the defibrillators were purchased by the council and the council picks up the cost of consumable items and maintenance.

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Resource implications:

The council has no dedicated fund to support the purchase or maintenance of defibrillators.

The Council must deploy its resources responsibly to meet the wide range of obligations it holds and to ensure equity across the community. The Council must ensure that supporting one area of council activity does not detract from the services provided in another area.

The council must be consistent in the responses to requests for defibrillators maintaining a fair and equitable approach.

As a medical device there is a necessity to maintain and ensure the device is fit for purpose following manufacturers recommended schedules. Failure to do so could lead to harm for users and as the asset owner the Council would potentially be held liable for the harm. This has an ongoing resource implication and poses a risk to the Council.

Conclusion:

Dalston Parish Council should fulfil its legal obligation to provide and maintain at least one defibrillator in the parish.

Dalston Parish Council has provided 2 defibrillators in the parish.

There are no dedicated funds paid to the Parish Council to purchase and maintain defibrillators.

The Council will refuse all future requests to purchase and maintain additional defibrillators on the grounds we have fulfilled our obligations and have no funds to provide any additional defibrillators.

The Council recognises the benefits of effective resuscitation and early defibrillation so would encourage interested groups to purchase and maintain defibrillators in the parish where they can identify and access funds to do so.

This policy was proposed by the policy and resources group at the meeting on 21.4.26. It was agreed by the Parish Council on 9 June 2026.

The policy will be reviewed in 2 years or if a substantial change in circumstances arises such as a change in legislation or available resources for the provision of defibrillators becomes available.